

Partisanship and Party System Institutionalization

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The transition from authoritarian rule to a stable democracy is a long and often fragile process. Elites and the public must accept and trust the institutions of democracy—and political parties are among the vital institutions of democracy. As others at this conference argue, elections are central to the democratic process, and political parties are the prime actors in electoral politics. Parties play a dominant role in structuring the political debate in most nations; they are the chief organizations that field candidates and compete for public office; and ultimately, parties form and structure the functioning of government in most democracies.

Our contribution to this discussion of parties and political development focuses on public attachments to parties as a prime measure of party system development and thus the development of a democratic polity. In established democracies, party images are a cognitive mechanism for orienting oneself to politics. The American Voter (Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes 1960) first established the role of long-term psychological predispositions—party identifications—in guiding citizen action. Partisanship provides a heuristic to organize the complexities of politics, integrating information into a political belief system, and evaluating political phenomena. Partisanship also guides political action, ranging from the decision to participate in politics to a voting choice in an election. Since the original findings of Campbell and his colleagues, a vast literature has demonstrated the importance of party attachments as a central element of democratic politics (Budge et al. 1976; Miller 1991; Holmberg 1994; Dalton and Wattenberg 2000; Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002). Thus, in a recent review of the literature on party identification, Weisberg and Greene (2003: 115) state “Party identification is the linchpin of our modern understanding of electoral democracy, and it is likely to retain that crucial theoretical position.”

Partisan loyalties may play an even greater role in transitional and consolidating democracies. The development of partisanship indicates a citizen’s attachment to a key institution that integrates them into the new democratic political order. For instance, research on postwar German public opinion treated the growth of partisanship as a sign of

developing ties to the new democratic system (Baker et al. 1981; Norpoth 1978). Similarly, research on emerging or consolidating democracies has examined whether citizens are developing partisan identities in post-Socialist societies (McDonough et al. 1998; Miller et al. 2000; Toka 1998; Kaase and Klingemann 1994) or in Latin American democracies (Mainwaring 1999; Hagopian 1998).

Partisan ties also have great heuristic value in a new democracy, enabling citizen to orient themselves to this new political world, evaluate political actors, and make political choices. The development of partisanship also can indicate a transformation in mass loyalties from the individual politicians who created the new political system to more enduring party organizations. For instance, the institutionalization of the French Fifth Republic was partially dependent on the transfer of attachments from Charles DeGaulle as an individual to Gaullism as a political identity. In other words, partisanship can signify the institutionalization of political loyalties from a charismatic leader to a political organization that transcends a specific person.

In addition to its value to the individual citizen, the aggregate development of partisanship has broad systemic effects. The Michigan scholars argued widespread partisanship was a stabilizing force for a political system. For instance, high levels of partisanship should dampen electoral volatility and encourage an equilibrium process in electoral politics. Similarly, Converse and Dupeux (1962) held that the potential for voters to support "flash" parties and demagogic leaders—such as the 1950s Poujadists in France or the supporters of Stanislaw Tyminski in the 1990 Polish presidential election—is greater when many citizens fail to identify with one of the established parties. Thus, systems in which many voters lack long-term partisan attachments are more vulnerable to wide election fluctuations and the appeals of charismatic/demagogic candidates. In addition, Almond and Verba (1963: 86) wrote that "Open and moderate partisanship, then, are essential to a stable democracy. They are the 'feeling correlates' of responsible majority and loyal opposition."

The classic model of partisanship presumed that party attachments were a predictable feature of established democratic party systems, and once established partisanship would be a persisting feature of a mature party system. Thus partisanship was one indicator of party system and democratic development.

However, there is mounting evidence of a general erosion of party attachments in advanced industrial democracies over the past few decades—a pattern directly contradictory to the classic partisanship model (Dalton 2004; Dalton and Wattenberg 2000; Clarke and Stewart 1998). This dealignment pattern has been linked to the diminishing value of partisanship in contemporary politics. The mass media fulfill many of the information functions once performed by political parties; citizen groups are active in interest articulation; and parties recruit fewer members. In addition, many better educated citizens no longer feel the need to rely on habitual party ties as a guide to their behavior (Dalton 2000). In other words, the empirical evidence suggests that having followed a trajectory of the development of mass party systems and popular attachments to parties, Western democracies are now experiencing a new political context where party systems and partisanship are weakening.

The dealignment thesis is primarily applied to the advanced industrial democracies as a consequence of their socioeconomic development, but there is also some evidence that these dealigning forces are now present in less developed societies. For instance, Costa Rica is the longest continuous democracy in Latin America. Sánchez (2003) has assembled an impressive timeseries of opinion surveys that document the slow weakening of partisanship over the 1978-2002 period. This trend contradicts the social learning model that predicts a growing institutionalization of partisan attachments. Hagopian (1998) has described a similar dealignment trend for a set of other Latin American democracies, and Mainwaring (2005; 1999) has shown that electoral volatility remains high in many new democracies. The time period for post-communist societies of Eastern Europe is shorter, but the evidence of strengthening party ties is also ambiguous (Miller et al. 2000).

This research on developing nations suggests that many of the factors weakening partisanship in advanced industrial democracies may also be affecting new democracies (Sánchez 2003; van Biezen 2003; Mainwaring 1999).¹ The expansion of the mass media is affecting all electoral systems and eroding the information dominance of parties, whether in the first world or the third world. The proliferation of citizen interest groups and NGOs is apparent across the range of old and new democracies. Contemporary parties are less likely to focus on the development of social group representation and

mass-membership (Toka 1998; also McAllister and White 2005); this is further encouraged by public financing of parties that lessens the need to mobilize mass supporters (van Biezen and Kopecky 2005). In short, the erosion of mass-based parties that personally engage the citizenry is a global phenomenon.

This paper therefore examines the extent of party attachments across a wide set of established, consolidating, and transitional democracies. We begin by testing a general model of partisan learning across this range of nations. We also consider whether new dealignment forces are creating a different trajectory for new democracies, so that they many not reach the position of stable partisanship that once applied to Western democracies. Our analyses are based on a unique set of cross-national surveys from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) project, which has collected the first cross-nationally comparable measure of partisanship for a wide set of democracies. Our findings generate new insights into the role of partisanship in contemporary democracies, and the causal processes that shape the development of these partisan ties.

Measuring Partisanship

The early analyses of the Michigan election studies demonstrated that partisanship was a central element in the political identities of Americans (Campbell et al. 1960, 1966). Since then, however, an on-going debate has questioned whether the concept of party identification can be exported to other democratic party systems (e.g., Butler and Stokes 1969; Budge, Crewe and Farlie 1976; Baker, Dalton and Hildebrandt 1981; Richardson 1991). Researchers noted that other party systems lacked some of the features that gave party identification its analytic power and conceptual basis in the United States. For instance, the concept of a “partisan independent” is a standard piece of the American political vocabulary, but this self-identification is not common in many other nations. Even more problematic, partisanship and vote are very closely related in many parliamentary systems. Other party systems lack the long ballots and complexity of the American electoral system that separate long-term party loyalties from short-term vote intentions. Partisan identities are more closely tied to immediate vote choice in parliamentary systems.

Despite these caveats, electoral researchers generally accept that enduring partisan loyalties, separate from vote choice, exist in democratic party systems. Most voters approach elections with a standing set of predispositions, even if the conceptualization and measurement of these predispositions differs according to the political and electoral context. Thus the focus shifted to alternative question wordings that were designed to measure partisanship in a way that is conceptually equivalent to the U.S. measure.²

The Comparative Study of Electoral Systems confronted this challenge by asking the following question:³

Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party?

Which party is that? Do you feel very close to this party, somewhat close, or not very close?

This question sacrifices the idea of a long-term partisan identity for the concept of closeness to a party; it is very similar to the partisanship question used in the Eurobarometer surveys. Closeness should produce a “softer” measure of partisanship, making it easier for respondents to express a party attachment and these attachments are likely to be more closely tied to immediate party preferences since there is not direct reference to long-term affective loyalties.⁴ Still, the question does tap affinity to a party, asked separate from immediate vote choice; the question also includes degrees of closeness to measure the strength of party ties. Another advantage is that the question was asked in post-election surveys so contextual effects are more comparable than in surveys asked at different points of an electoral cycle. Our analyses are based on this CSES question.

Table 1 displays the percent of the public in each nation who say they are close to a political party across both modules of the CSES.⁵ There is considerable variation in the degree of partisanship across nations, ranging from the vast majority of the public in Australia to barely any partisans in the two non-democracies in this set, Hong Kong and Belarus. Across the nations in module I, only 46 percent of the public claims to be close to any political party. Across a somewhat different set of nations in module II, 48 percent are partisans.

As a subjective identity, partisanship is a difficult concept to measure. Part of the variation across nations may reflect political traditions about the expression of

partisanship, or current sympathy toward political parties and party systems (Dalton and Weldon 2004). In a few cases, nations also used a differently worded question to be consistent with their national trend question.⁶ We also suspect that the translation of partisanship into multiple languages will generate some variation. Thus, we are cautious about the interpretation of any single national case from these data.⁷ Instead, we will focus our attention on broad cross-national patterns, and in testing the sources of partisanship with these data.

= = = Table 1 goes about here = = =

Even from these initial distributions, several factors seem to encourage partisanship at the aggregate level. Consistent with a social learning model described below, citizens in established democracies are more likely to express a partisanship attachment (54 percent) than citizens in new democracies (37 percent) for the Module I nations. These patterns are broadly consistent with the thesis that partisanship is a measure of the institutionalization of a party system. These results encourage us to probe more deeply into the factors creating these partisan attachments.

A Social Learning Model

Although each nation has its own unique partisan history, previous research has stressed a general social learning theory that assembles the elements of national experiences into a single model. Philip Converse's (1969) seminal article, "Of Time and Partisan Stability", lays out the simple yet elegant theory that partisan attachments primarily result from a combination of *parental socialization* and *life-cycle* processes.⁸ We see this as a somewhat apolitical model, because it suggests that citizens in any two democracies, at a similar stage of their electoral history, will display the same levels of partisanship regardless of the details of party competition and party histories. The Converse model provides a baseline that can test for this uniformity in political learning. Converse applied the model to five nations, and demonstrated a good empirical fit. We expect the complexity of the political histories of the nations in the CSES and the different democratic trajectories of new democracies today will require more elaborate modeling, which we explore after application of the Converse model.

The first assumption of the Converse model holds that new, young voters in stable democracies typically inherit their initial partisan loyalties from their parents. Across a set of Western democracies, for instance, Jennings and his colleagues (1979) demonstrated that a majority of pre-voting age children already share the party predispositions of their parents. Converse calls this the “partisan push” that is socialized by the parental generation.

Second, once individuals are eligible to vote and enter the electorate, in stable party systems their experiences typically reinforce their early predispositions. With age—or more precisely with repeated electoral support of one’s preferred party—partisan attachments tend to stabilize and strengthen over time (Converse 1976; Jennings and Markus 1984). Thus, research regularly finds a strong relationship between age and partisan attachment in advanced democracies (Converse 1969, 1976; Dalton 2000).

However, the social learning model has different implications for new democracies. Typically, these citizens can expect little “partisan push” from their parents; in part, because their parents do not have ties to a political party or a life history of voting in democratic elections, and many voters are long-distant from the socialization experience of their parents. In addition, the life-cycle learning of partisanship presupposes the continuous existence of political parties and a democratic system. Older voters in the first Spanish or Portuguese elections of 1975, for example, or the post-communist elections of 1989-90 had missed part of their electoral learning experience. Another example was postwar Germany, where research found a weak parental push since older voters themselves had only weak party ties, but a gradual increase in partisanship with continued experience in the new electoral system (Baker, Dalton and Hildebrandt 1981, 221-229; Norpoth 1978).

This social learning model has empirical predictions for cross-national research on partisanship. The model implies that partisanship will be stronger in older democracies, where both the socialization and life-cycle processes have been functioning. This is broadly consistent with the cross-national patterns displayed in Table 1.

Another verification of the basic social learning model can be seen in the relationship between partisanship and age. For stable democracies, individuals should begin their electoral experience with an inherited partisan push from their parents. Then

partisanship should generally strengthen during the life cycle if most voters continue to support their preferred party. The degree of continuity in the party system and individual voting patterns would affect the slope of this age relationship. For new democracies, the new voters should initially have a lower level of partisanship because they received less partisan push from their parents--or no push at all. Partisanship should strengthen with age, but the initial relationship might be relatively flat because older voters lack a long electoral history, and might actually learn to identify with the new parties at a slower rate than younger voters. This is the essence of Converse's social learning model.

Figure 1 provides an initial test of this model. The figure divides the CSES Module I nations into old and new democracies. Then we computed the percentage expressing closeness to any party within a set of age cohorts, separately for old and new democracies.⁹ The top line in the figure displays the expected age relationship within established democracies. The youngest voters begin their electoral experience with approximately 45 percent saying they are close to a party. This increases more rapidly early in the life cycle and then the curve reaches a plateau with approximately 65 percent partisans. In new democracies, younger voters begin with an initially lower level of partisanship because there is less partisan push from their parents. In addition, the differences in partisan attachments by age are smaller--in part because older voters do not have a lifetime of accumulated party voting in new democracies.

=== Figure 1 goes about here ===

Figure 1 provides initial support for the logic of the social learning model, but Converse's model is more rigorous. Rather than a simple dichotomy between old and new democracies, the model conceptualizes electoral experience as a continuous variable. There are predictable differences in learning rates across nations and cohorts that reflect their own life history and the history of their party systems. To more directly test this model, we replicated the basic features of Converse's research. This analysis is based on age cohorts, so that we can compare life experiences across different groups. For each age cohort, we calculated two variables that tap the essence of the social learning model.

First, an index of accumulated electoral experience (I_e) calculates the total electoral experience since each cohort became eligible to vote. Following Converse's model, we began with the average number of years each cohort had been eligible to vote.

For continuously established democracies, this is simply the number of years since the average cohort member turned 18 (or 21 for older cohorts). For new democracies, this is the number of years since the democratic transition--and initially this might be an equal value for all age groups who were eligible at the first election.¹⁰ We then made several adjustments to I_e in order to capture the complexity of social learning as theorized by Converse. Since exposure to elections is not the same as participation, the index was adjusted to consider the actual likelihood of electoral participation. At the cross-national level, we calculated the average turnout in national elections in the 1950-1998 period and used this to adjust electoral experience. In other words, this adjustment predicts that greater partisan learning occurs in nations where more people actually vote, than in nations with lower turnout.¹¹ In addition, the model presumes that age groups whose first electoral experience is delayed beyond the normal age of enfranchisement are subject to a "resistance" factor when they do begin to participate. This resistance factor applies primarily to citizens who came of age in a non-democratic political system, and only began voting in later life. In addition, Swiss women received a delayed franchise (starting in 1970) in the oldest age cohorts. Following Converse's initial analyses, we computed electoral experience of each cohort in each nation, adjusted to take these factors into account.

The index of accumulated electoral experience, I_e , primarily reflects the social learning during the life cycle that a cohort experiences. Cross-national differences in accumulated learning also represent the variation between new and established democracies.

The second variable in the model captures the effects of parental socialization. The operationalization of this index of parental push, I_p , is rather straightforward. The impact of the parents is calculated as equal to the accumulated electoral experience (I_e) of the parents when individuals were 15 years of age.

The index of parental push, I_p , may not appear so, but it primarily reflects cross-national differences in the longevity of party systems. The Converse model predicts that I_p would have an essentially constant value across cohorts for any political system in which the parental acquisition of partisanship had continued uninterrupted for the two previous generations. In such nations, all cohorts begin their electoral experience with an

identical amount of partisan push. In new democracies, however, as cohorts begin acquiring electoral experience they are creating a basis for future parental transfer to their children. Thus the value of I_p grows in new democracies until it eventually reaches the plateau of stable democracies--if democracy becomes consolidated and there is continuous electoral experience.

After we calculated the values of these two predictors, I_e and I_p , we added them to the aggregated cohort file. We measured partisanship as the percent saying they are close to a party within each age cohort, P_c .¹² This partisanship measure is the dependent variables in our analyses. This procedure yields 627 cohorts as the basis of the analysis.¹³

Our baseline model uses these two measures of social learning to predict the level of partisanship across all cohorts; this is displayed in Model I in Table 2. Both effects suggest a modest degree of partisan learning as a function of electoral experience. And even though these effects may appear small, when cumulated across a life time they can have substantial effects. For instance, the .006 coefficient for individual electoral experience (I_e) appears small, but when applied over a 50 year life history of voting, this predicts a 30 percent increase in partisanship ($.006*50=.30$). The model estimates a partisan push from parents to have a nearly equivalent effect. However, the overall fit of the model is limited ($R^2=.224$) for a cohort analysis model. Thus, a general model of social learning does appear across the CSES nations, but there is also substantial room for improvement.

= = = Table 2 goes about here = = =

Following Converse's lead, we conducted residual analyses to diagnose the model and develop a more accurate representation of the processes generating partisanship across our set of nations. One general cross-national deviation was that predicted partisanship underestimated actual levels of partisanship in several new democracies. On reflection, the present transitions to democracy are often different from the German and Italian examples that Converse studied. The German and Italian systems began almost *de novo*, excluding representatives of the prior regime; the prior regime also had not sanctioned elections. Many of the recent democratic transitions have followed a different pattern. In Eastern Europe, the communists regularly held elections (even if the outcome was foreordained) and reformed communist parties have run in the elections of

the new democratic system, and in some instances have fared quite well. Similarly, even though Taiwan's and Mexico's transitions to democracy are dated to begin with the 1988 election, a large proportion of the electorate had pre-existing loyalties to the same parties that ran in previous semi-democratic elections. Thus, we added a dichotomous variable where there was significant party continuity between non-democratic and democratic regimes.¹⁴

Model II in Table 2 shows that a continuity of old guard parties has a strong positive effect in stimulating party ties. For instance, a PRI or PAN voter in Mexico in the first fully democratic could carry forward party ties developed in previous elections, just as Communists in Russia or Lithuania could begin their democratic experience with strong party ties. Furthermore, adding this variable to the model actually clarifies the working of the social learning process, and both I_p and I_e are stronger in Model II. Thus the overall explanatory power of the model increases to an R^2 of .375.

Further diagnostics led to another adjustment of the analysis. Even beyond the effects of the turnout adjustment of I_e , it appeared that nations with systems of compulsory voting had higher levels of partisanship. We reasoned that compulsory rules encouraged citizens to be more engaged in elections, even if they eventually did not vote. Adding a measure of compulsory voting rules, this variable also emerged as statistically significant in Model III.¹⁵

Model III provides a potent prediction of partisanship, explaining more than 40 percent of the variance with four variables. This model first underscores the importance of Converse's general social learning model. Both individual electoral experience and parental push have a strong effect in shaping the partisanship of a cohort—and this general pattern applies even after adjusting for the nature of the democratic transition (the old guard variable) or a prominent feature of the electoral system (compulsory voting). There is additional variation that is unexplained in this model, although we suspect we are approaching the explanatory limits of these data. Thus, as a final diagnostic we calculated residuals from Model III and correlated these with other potential predictors. For instance, a classification of old/new democracies is essentially unrelated to these residuals ($r = .034$) because this factor is already embedded in our measures of I_e and I_p . The residuals also suggested that partisanship was weaker in surveys conducted in

elections that were only for president (without parallel legislative elections). One might hypothesize that the limited final choices in many presidential elections left supporters of many parties without a candidate of their party to support. There was a weak negative correlation between president-only elections and the partisan residuals (-.168). We also examined whether fractionalized multiparty systems might limit party learning; but the correlation between the effective number of parties and partisan residuals was modest (-.084). Finally, we considered a methodological artifact of the CSES survey; three surveys prompted the respondent with specific party labels as part of a revised partisanship question (Australia and the New Zealand survey in Module II). Such prompts typically increase levels of partisanship, and this effect is stronger than the others we considered ($r=.181$). We did not estimate additional models with these variables, but they suggest other residual factors that may be influencing partisanship beyond the social learning model.¹⁶

Old versus New Democracies

The analytic power of the social learning model provides a framework for understanding how party ties are generally acquired and strengthened. Yet, we earlier noted that there are questions of whether this model consistently applies across established or new democracies. For the established democracies, the dealignment literature suggests that party bonds are no longer growing through the life cycle, and are actually declining across generations (Dalton and Wattenberg 2003; Dalton 2006). Fewer young citizens are beginning their voting experience with a partisan attachment inherited from their parents, and the partisan loyalty that might strength partisanship over time is also eroding. Thus, the dealignment thesis would suggest that the partisan learning model is weakening within established democracies.

Some of the literature on new democracies similarly suggests a weak social learning model. The tumult of electoral politics in the developing world, and the impact of dealigning forces such as mass media elections and candidate-centered politics, is seen as eroding party learning. Thus Sánchez (2003) and Hagopian (1998) cite evidence of weakening party ties in Latin America over time, and the literature on Eastern Europe yields mixed findings on the degree of partisan learning since the transition (Miller et al.

2000; White, Rose and McAllister 1997). And since party politics is generally seen as integral to the initial development of democracy, such a pattern of hindered partisan learning would have negative implications for the institutionalization of democracy in these new systems.

The social learning model allows us to explicitly make these comparisons by applying the model separately in established and new democracies. The left-hand model in Table 3 shows the result of the model applied only to established democracies (the old guard variable drops out because this does not apply to any established democracies). In established democracies, the social learning model works to strengthen partisanship with repeated electoral experience (I_e coefficient = .005) and across generations (I_p coefficient = .003), although both of these effects are weaker than in the model for all nations. This is not due to the restricted variance in partisan experiences in established democracies; the parental push measure has limited variance in established democracies, but the electoral experience variable has considerable variance. Moreover, the unstandardized coefficients are less affected by the variance of predictors. Rather, these results imply that partisan learning is weaker in established democracies than for our overall set of nations.

=== Table 3 goes about here ===

Applying this model to the new democracies yields much stronger estimates of partisan learning. When individuals accumulate electoral experience, it much more strongly translates into partisan attachments (I_e coefficient = .022); this is four times greater than the relationship in established democracies. Similarly, when there is partisan transfer across generations, the impact in forming party ties is substantially stronger than in the established democracies (I_p coefficient = .015). The existence of old guard parties from the previous regime is also a strong stimulant for partisanship. Because of these stronger effects, we now explain over half the total variance in cohort partisanship.

At first glance, these results may appear paradoxical. They imply that citizens in new democracies are learning partisanship at a faster rate than in established democracies—yet we saw in Table 1 and Figure 1 that partisanship is stronger in established democracies and the age gradient is steeper in established democracies. The explanation is quite simple. In established democracies the citizens have much more opportunity to accumulate electoral learning—both from their parents (I_p) and from their

own repeated experience in elections (I_e). Thus, when we add both components together (I_p and I_e), there is a steady and large increase in years of electoral experience among older cohorts in established democracies. This is portrayed in Figure 2, which plots the total of I_p and I_e by age for the cohorts in the established democracies of the CSES project. Averaged across all age groups, publics in established democracies have a total of 27 years of electoral experience, which translates into higher levels of partisanship.

=== Figure 2 goes about here ===

The situation is much different in the set of new democracies included in the CSES. By definition, in these nations democratic elections are a new experience, thus many older citizens have not had a lifetime to develop partisan ties (and pass these ties to their offspring). In other nations, such as many of the Latin American nations in CSES, there have been cycles of democratic and non-democratic regimes, which restrains the accumulation of partisan learning; the resistance factor in the learning model means that when democracy is reinstated much of the earlier partisan experience has been lost. Thus, the lower line in Figure 2 indicates that the total electoral experience of cohorts in new democracies shows very little difference by age. And compared to the established democracies, publics in new democracies average only 5 years of total electoral experience (I_p and I_e), which translates into their low levels of partisanship.

Partisanship and Democracy

We began our analyses based on the premise that party ties are important in binding individuals to the democratic process and in providing a heuristic for managing the complexities of democratic citizenship. In simple terms, we were repeating Schattschneider's dictum that democracy with parties—or partisanship—is unthinkable.

Yet, portions of the recent literature points to the erosion of partisanship in both established and new democracies. While such developments might be a sign of the maturation of party systems and electorates in advanced industrial democracies (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000), the lack of party ties would be a more onerous sign for newly emerging and consolidating democracies that are trying to institutionalize democratic politics and party systems.

By studying partisanship within the framework of the social learning theory that Converse proposed, empirical analysis of partisanship in the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems project provides insights into these processes of partisan learning and dealignment. For the established democracies, there is evidence that partisan learning is weakening. Part of the evidence is the aggregate erosion of partisanship over the later third of the 20th century (Dalton and Wattenberg 2000). In addition, our model finds that the impact of parental socialization and electoral experience is weaker in established democracies (compared to new democracies) and apparently weaker than these same processes a generation ago.

Fewer individuals in new democracies hold party attachments, and this is demonstrated in both the CSES data and other analyses. One concern is that national conditions will restrict the learning of partisanship as these nations attempt to consolidate their new democratic system, with negative consequences for the party system and the democratic process.

However, our findings are more sanguine about the partisan potential in the new democracies represented in the CSES project. First, our research suggests that where partisan learning can occur—through repeated experience voting in elections or in inheriting parental partisanship—these effects are stronger in new democracies. *It is not that citizens in new democracies are not learning partisanship, rather, it is that the conditions where partisan learning can occur are lacking.* Democratic elections are still of recent vintage in many of the post-communist nations of Eastern Europe, and these party systems are still consolidating. Many of the current democracies in Latin America, Africa and East Asia have not had a history of continuous democratic elections. Second, the stronger impact of partisan learning in new democracies most likely reflects a different political context than in previous waves of democratization. The democratic transitions in Germany, Italy and Japan after World War II occurred in nations where democracy was not embraced by the public, and partisanship carried a negative connotation because of the prior regimes. Citizens in these nations were therefore slow to develop new ties to the democratic political parties. In the current wave of democratization, publics demonstrate strong democratic aspirations and a positive view

of the democratic process. In such circumstances, partisan learning is likely to function more effectively than in previous democratic transitions.

This presents a bit of a chicken and the egg problem: partisanship will strengthen in new democracies when there are stable democratic party systems, but stable democratic party systems are partially built on widespread partisanship. Still, we see this as an optimistic potential for new democracies. If elites can build a functioning democratic party system, then partisanship should follow. The difficulty will be in building and sustaining democratic elections—but if it they build it, the citizens will come.

Table 1. The Percentage Close to any Party

Nation	1996-2000	2000-2005
Australia*	83.5	83.9
Ukraine	70.5	
Israel	64.2	62.4
United States	57.0	56.1
New Zealand*	56.3	55.7
Russian Federation	56.1	
France	---	55.8
Poland	53.7	41.8
Sweden	53.1	48.8
Norway*	52.9	41.3
Canada	52.1	
Portugal	51.8	51.8
Iceland	51.6	54.2
Denmark	51.4	50.0
Brazil	--	49.4
Great Britain	48.8	44.9
Czech Republic	48.8	63.7
Mexico	48.2	51.9
Romania	47.1	
Finland	--	46.6
Spain	42.8	61.3
Bulgaria	--	42.7
Japan	37.5	
Germany	37.4	37.2
Switzerland	36.7	42.5
Belgium	--	36.1
Hungary	35.8	52.6
Lithuania	34.6	
Taiwan	33.8	42.8
Netherlands*	27.9	
Ireland	---	27.7
Republic of Korea	27.3	40.0
Peru	22.8	
Slovenia	21.7	
Thailand	21.5	
Chile	20.7	
Belarus	11.7	
Hong Kong	7.9	28.1

Source: Comparative Study of Electoral Systems, Modules I and II. Weighted data (missing data responses were not included in the calculation of percentages).

* The Dutch survey used a differently worded question to be consistent with their national timeseries; the Australian survey used a different question wording, that prompted for support of specific parties; the New Zealand survey used a similar party prompt question in Module II; the Norwegian survey asked a non-standard party question in module II.

Table 2. Predicting Cohort Partisanship

Predictor	Model I		Model II		Model III	
	b	β	b	β	b	β
Constant	.370 (.009)		.281 (.011)		.275 (.010)	
I_e Individual vote experience	.006 (.001)	.412	.008 (.001)	.578	.008 (.001)	.574
I_p Parental Push	.005 (.001)	.111	.010 (.002)	.223	.008 (.002)	.178
Parties from old regime			.171 (.014)	.453	.170 (.014)	.454
Compulsory voting					.133 (.022)	.190
Multiple R	.474		.612		.639	
Rsqr	.224		.375		.409	

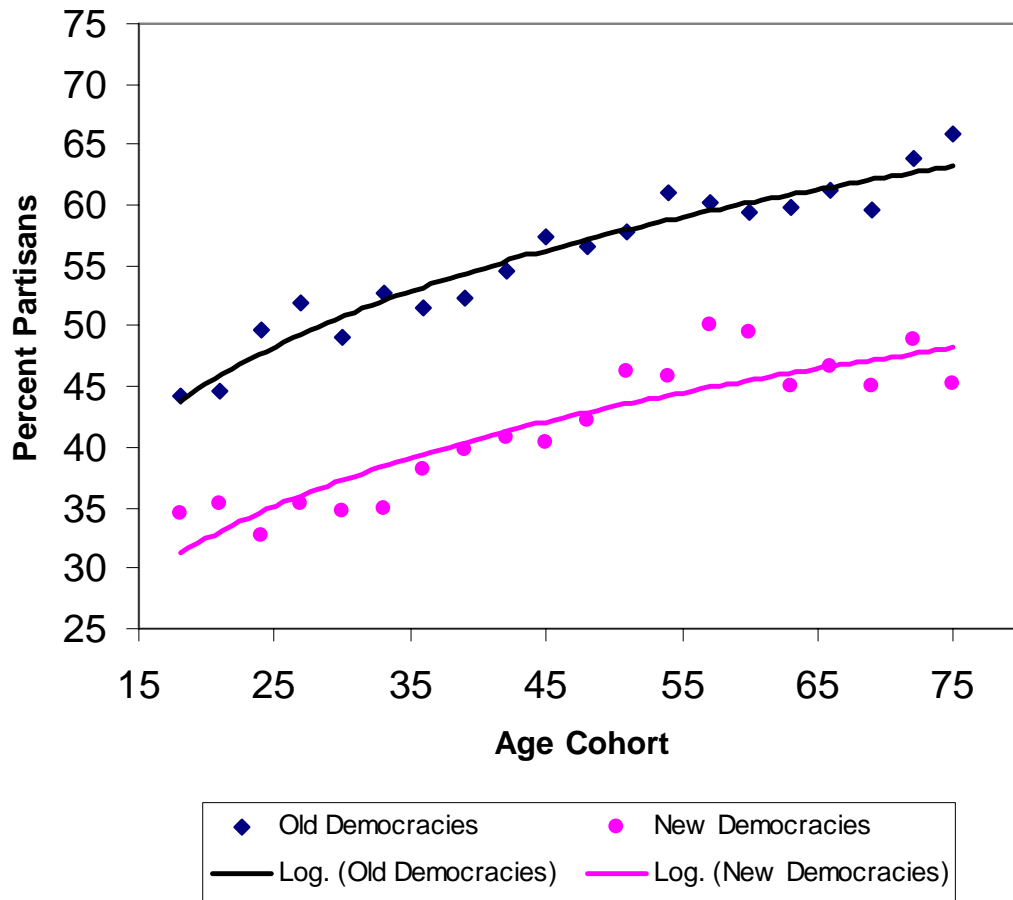
Source: Cohorts derived from CSES I and II (N=627). Table presents the unstandardized and standardized coefficients from OLS regressions.

Table 3. Predicting Partisanship across Old and New Democracies

Predictor	Old Democracies		New Democracies	
	b	β	b	β
Constant	.370 (.017)		.128 (.015)	
I_e Individual vote experience	.005 (.001)	.412	.022 (.001)	.637
I_p Parental Push	.003 (.002)	.111	.155 (.025)	.230
Parties from old regime	--		.262 (.014)	.774
Compulsory voting	.158 (.024)	.331	.124 (.043)	.104
Multiple R	.570		.766	
Rsqr	.325		.586	
N	(297)		(319)	

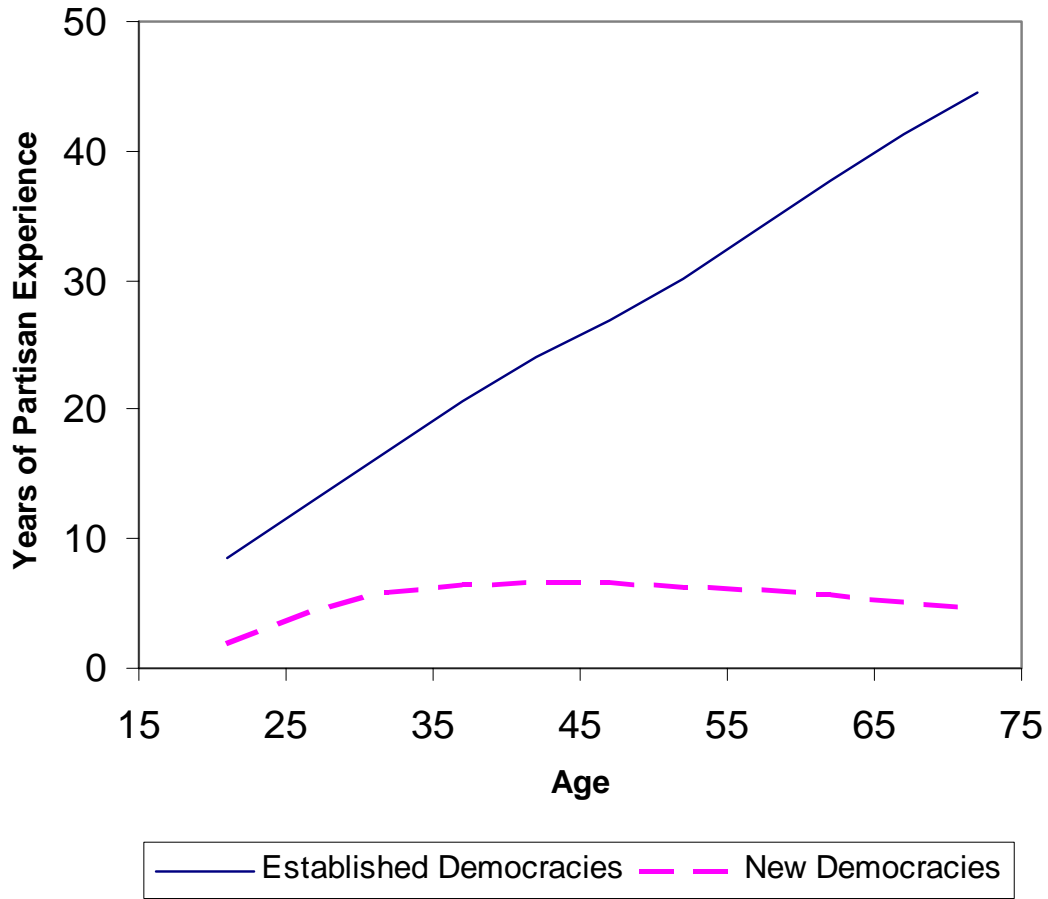
Source: Cohorts derived from CSES I and II. Table presents the unstandardized and standardized coefficients from OLS regressions.

Figure 1 The Growth of Partisanship with Age



Source: CSES Module I (excluding the Netherlands). Age cohorts are collapsed into three year intervals beginning with 18-20 and ending with 75-77.

Figure 2. The Total Partisan Experience of Age Groups in Established and New Democracies.



Source: CSES Module I and II cohort file. The figure plots the total electoral experience (I_p and I_e) for age cohorts in established and new democracies.

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Endnotes

¹ Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi (2004: 256-61) suggest that Africa may not fit this pattern. Using a similar measure of partisanship they find relatively high levels of attachments in Africa, and attribute it to the parties' conscious efforts to mobilize the public and the lack of other civil society groups.

² We think one of the most valid measures is used in the German election studies which encapsulates the meaning of partisanship in the question. It asks "Many people in the Federal Republic lean toward a particular party for a long time, although they may occasionally vote for a different party. How about you: do you in general lean toward a particular party? [If yes} Taken altogether, how strongly or weakly do you lean toward this party, very strongly, fairly strongly, moderately, fairly weakly, or very weakly?"

³ This is variable A3004 in the final CSES Module I dataset (August 4, 2003); and variable B3028 in the June 30, 2005 release of the Module II dataset. The text provides the short form of the question. In addition, some nations included a question eliciting ties to multiple parties or to party blocs. For an analysis of the concept of multiple identities see Schmitt (forthcoming).

⁴ Barnes et al. (1988) did an extensive comparison of the traditional American party identification question and a party closeness question that were both asked in the Political Action panel study. They found high correlations between both measures at two timepoints ($r=.85$ and $.88$) and general consistency in the patterns and correlates of both questions.

⁵ When two surveys of a single nation were included in a module, the results were averaged. We also excluded the Belgian data from module I because it is based on a non-comparable party preference question. The New Zealand campaign subset was not included from Module I; we used only the post-election responses. We utilized only the German telephone survey in 2002 and excluded the mailback questionnaire data that seemed to overinflate partisanship (and other variables). A preliminary release of the British CSES supplement allowed us to include it in Table 1, but British data are not part of the CSES merged file and thus are not included in the cohort analyses.

⁶ The Dutch survey uses a more restrictive wording of the Dutch election study timeseries; the more comparable partisanship question in the Eurobarometers finds three quarters of the Dutch say they are close to a party. The Australian question (and New Zealand in Module II) also follows national traditions, including a prompt on specific parties as part of the question wording which may have increased expressed partisanship.

⁷ A partial validity check was available from the 2002 European Social Survey. The ESS used a fully standardized questionnaire and administered the survey simultaneously in two dozen European nations. Fourteen nations were included in both the CSES and ESS, although this is a limited set of cases excluding the non-European cases in CSES. Despite this restricted variance, the aggregate percentage of parties is correlated at $.48$ in these studies ($N=14$). For information on the ESS see www.europeansocialsurvey.org.

⁸ Additional applications of this model include Converse (1976); Baker, Dalton and Hildebrandt (1981: ch. 8); Noporth (1978) and Converse and Markus (1984).

⁹ The figure codes respondents into three year age groups, starting with 18-20 and ending with 75-77. The age variable in the Peruvian surveys did not allow for such recoding, so they are not included in these analyses.

¹⁰ Most of the dates of initial democratic election are clear-cut, and for old democracies the exact date does not matter because all respondents have grown up in a democratic environment. However, in a few nations there is not a consensus on the date of the first democratic election. In our study, we coded the first elections as: 1988 for Mexico, and 1992 for Taiwan (1992). For Chile (1935), Brazil (1945), South Korea (1960), and Thailand (1969), after the initial institution of democracy there were significant periods where democracy was interrupted by authoritarian rule.

¹¹ The turnout statistics were taken from the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2002: 80). In addition, because the young are less likely to vote, Converse estimated that younger cohorts accumulate electoral experience at a slower rate than older age groups. Our exploratory analyses suggest that this adjustment was unlikely to have a major impact in the CSES data. So this correction is not used in the analyses presented here.

¹² The statistics in Table 1 excluded 'don't know' and other missing data responses, and this process was followed in calculating cohort partisanship. In addition, we reran the analyses including 'don't know' responses as non-partisanship, and obtained essentially similar results.

¹³ Some of the nations in Table 1 were not included in our cohort analyses on methodological reasons. The Netherlands was not included because it did not ask the standard CSES question. Peru was not included because the collapsed age coding did not allow us to generate cohorts comparable to the other nations. In addition, we did not include the Ukraine, which has a higher level of partisanship than found in other cross-national surveys (e.g., Miller et al. 2000) and required a dummy variable in all the models described below. Instead of retaining this dummy variable for a single nation, we excluded the Ukrainian case. This yields 57 surveys with 11 age cohorts each, or 627 datapoints (57 * 11).

¹⁴ The nations coded for a continuity of old guard parties are: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Mexico, Poland, Romania, Russia, and Taiwan.

¹⁵ We created a four category variable based on data reported by IDEA: 1) no laws, 2) potential social repercussions (Mexico), 3) weak enforcement (as in Brazil and Chile), and 4) strict enforcement (Australia and Belgium).

¹⁶ The nations with the largest residuals (over +/- .15) were: Australia (.16), Israel (.16), USA (.15), Ireland (-.18), Belarus (-.19), Chile (-.20), Hong Kong (-.24) and Belgium (-.29). Most of the systematic residual variance seems linked to national conditions, which implies that national circumstances also affect partisanship. The eta correlation between nation and residuals is .85; but the difficulty is to define this variation in systematic terms. This might involve the continuity of parties within a nation, the culture of partisanship, or the translation of the partisanship questions in the CSES survey.